

SCARABÆUS HERCULES.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Antennæ clavatæ capitulo fissili.

Tibiæ anticæ sæpius dentatæ.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 541.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

SCARABÆUS scutellatus, thoracis cornu incurvo maximo: subtus barbato unidentato, capitis recurvato: supra multidentato.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 541.

Röfel. Inf. 2 *Scarab.* 1. tab. A. fig. 1. et *Inf.* 4. tab 5. fig. 3.

Edw. Av. tab. 334.

Quis, ait celeberrimus BUFFONUS, efficit ut de summo mundi Creatore altius sublimiusque concipiamus? an ille qui soles et planetas potestate sua formantem, mundorumque circulos gubernantem depingit; an qui apum œconomiam ordinantem, aut alas Scarabæi ferio et fedulo plicantem? Talis equidem tanti viri sententia *Historiæ Naturalis* minutiores partes investigantibus foret inimicissima, utpote vix hominis literati studio dignas,

dignas, aut faltem præ majoribus et nobilioribus Zoologiae partibus fordidas, nisi quod et alii de hac re cenfuerint in eadem ponamus trutina; viri nempe non minus ingenio vivido et pollenti, quam virtute per omne ævum laudandi. Perilluftris Boylius breviter et nervefe fuam ita fententiam edidit; fe non tam Naturæ majoribus horologiis, quam parvulis et minutis ftupescere; Deumque plane dixit effe maximum in minimis. Et profecto fi elephantis aut rhinocerotis molem giganteam miramur, acarum attoniti contemblemur necesse est, cui plura funt membra, corpusque magis complicatum quam animalibus majoribus. Ad fumum vero augetur nobis admiratio, innumera ifta animalcula explorantibus, quæ non nifi microfcopii ope videnda funt; quibus vel ipfe acarus est quali elephas. Immortalis PLINII fententia de his parvulis Naturæ operibus ex ipfius verbis conftat. “In his tam parvis, tamque fere nullis, quæ ratio! quanta vis! quam inextricabilis perfectio!”

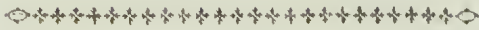
Infectum vero, quod nunc describere pergimus, nequaquam ad minora infecta pertinet, fed inter maximas fui generis fpecies numeratur. Phificis probe cognitum est, et a multis defcriptum. Americam incolit calidiorem, et inter alios fcarabæos præminet cornu in vafam longitudinem e thorace extenfo necnon alio cornu a capite orto, et fufum tendente, donec cornu thoracis pene occurfet. Cornu fuperius fuperficiem habet inferiorem villo, feu tomento denfo holoferico elegantiffime veftitam. Infecta hæc (ut fertur) Mammææ Americanæ ramulos cornubus complexa, circum-gyrando vulnerant, ut humorem ab arbore incifa
ftillantem

stillantem forbeant ; quo mox inebriata in terram decidunt, et facillime capiuntur. Huic tamen famæ, ut doctus observat FABRICIUS, fides non temere habenda est, quoniam, ut antea diximus, cornu, cui superficies inferior barbata est, hoc modo abrasum omnino denunderetur. Insectum hoc, ob molem insignem, optimum præbet exemplum characteris generici. Magnitudine multum variat. Dubitari etiam merito potest, annon minora aliqua specimina veluti speciem diversam descripserint auctores ; exempli gratia Scarabæum Alcides FABRICII, adeo huic nostro affinem, at vix probe separari queat, quamvis multo sit minor, cornuaque minus conspicue dentata gerat.



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THE
HERCULES BEETLE,



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Antennæ divided at the tip or head into several lamellæ.

Tibiæ, (or second joints of the fore legs) generally toothed.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

BEETLE, with the thoracic horn very large, bent downward, bearded beneath, furnished with a single tooth, and bifid at its extremity: the horn on the head bent upwards, and furnished on its upper part with several teeth.

Rösel. vol. 2. plate A. fig. 1. and vol. 4. plate 5. fig. 3.

Drury, vol. 1. plate 30. fig. 1.

Edwards, vol. 7. plate 324.

Who, says the celebrated Count De BUFFON, gives us the grandest and, and most magnificent ideas of the Creator of the universe? He who represents him superintending the formation of suns and of planets,
and

and guiding the revolutions of worlds, or he who discovers him busied in regulating the œconomy of an hive of bees, or deeply engaged in folding the wings of a beetle? Such an observation, from so elevated a character, might be capable of exciting a very wrong and unfavourable idea, with respect to the study of the smaller branches of Natural History; as if unworthy of any considerable share of attention, or at least of but slight importance, when compared with the higher orders of Zoology. But let us recollect the sentiments of other men, of the most comprehensive minds, the most brilliant abilities, and the most exalted piety and virtue.

The celebrated Mr. BOYLE used to express himself on this subject in a somewhat singular phrase, viz. That for his own part, his wonder dwelt not so much on the clocks as the watches of Nature; and that the Creator appeared in reality to be *maximus in minimis*. If we are struck with admiration at the prodigious bulk of the elephant, or the rhinoceros, we are lost in astonishment at the contemplation of a mite, for in that animal there is a more complicated structure, and a greater variety of parts than in the larger animals; and how must this astonishment increase, when we contemplate by the help of glasses, those innumerable legions of animalcula, compared to which, a mite may itself be regarded as a kind of elephant.

The opinion of PLINY on the minuter parts of Nature is evident, from his own words. “ In his tam parvis tamque sere nullis quæ ratio! quanta vis! quam inextricabilis perfectio!”.

The

The insect, however, which makes its appearance on the present plate, is not amongst those of the smaller order; but on the contrary, is one of the most gigantic animals of the class to which it belongs. This curious creature has long been known to the admirers of Natural History, and has been figured by several authors. It is a native of the warmer parts of America, and is remarkable for the excessive length of the horn, which proceeds from its thorax, as well as for another horn which proceeds from its head, and bends upwards, so as almost to meet the thoracic one. The uppermost of these horns, or processes, is most curiously coated on the inner surface, with a fine hair or velvet-like substance.

It has been said that these insects have a custom of taking hold of the slender branches of the *Mammæa Americana*, and swinging themselves round with such rapidity, as to wound, by this circular motion, the branch on which they fasten, in order to be enabled to suck the juice distilling from the tree; by which they are soon inebriated, so as to fall in great numbers on the ground, and to be easily taken. But this account, as the learned FABRICIUS has well observed, seems not very probable; since the thoracic horn being bearded on its lower surface, would undoubtedly be made bare by this operation. This Insect, from the remarkable size of all its parts, affords an admirable example of the characters of the genus to which it belongs.

It varies much in size, and it may even be much doubted whether some of the smaller specimens have not been regarded as distinct species by authors: such, for instance, is the *Scarabæus Alcides* of FABRICIUS,
which

which seems so extremely nearly allied to the Hercules, as scarce to admit of separation, notwithstanding its size, which is hardly more than half that of the former; and the horns not furnished with such remarkable denticulations as in the Hercules.